



**Gate City Immigrant Initiative**  
**March 22, 2017**  
**9:00AM – 10:30AM**  
**Nashua City Hall Auditorium**

*Gate City Immigrant Initiative is a subcommittee of the Nashua Cultural Connections Committee.*

**Present:** Sylvia Gale, Yoly Rivero-Lara, Pastor Richard Cullen, Shayana Owen, Jason Wakefield, Debora Naciff, Martha Alvarado, Dominique Boutaud, Pedro Altagracia, Samba Halkose, Amadou Hamady, Adelina Hernandez, Beth Todgham, Wilberto Torres, Jenn Hosking (co-chair), Lauren Osowski (co-chair)

Commenced at 9:00AM

**Introductions**

**Co-Chair Updates:**

Jenn shared a public art event, Come Back Kitchen Table, that is a joint project with ArtVentures, City Arts Nashua and the Nashua Public Library. Ten tables will be created and placed around the city. The library will have one with a bookish banquet theme. The tables will be revealed on May 6<sup>th</sup>. As part of this project the library is hosting a photo essay contest. All ages are invited to take a picture of what dinner around the family table means to them in 2017. This is a great opportunity to exhibit different cultures and experiences had by our community members.

Lauren provided an update on the fall symposium planning. It will take place at Rivier University on October 13, 2017. The keynote speaker will be finalized soon. The day will have a welcoming theme with a focus on health. The next planning session is scheduled for April 5<sup>th</sup> in Room 208 at City Hall.

Lauren provided an update on the Welcoming Walk tentatively scheduled for either June 24<sup>th</sup> or 25<sup>th</sup>. Pedro is reaching out to local businesses to see if they will be open as a site to host something educational or cultural, similar to the structure of ArtWalk. A kickoff is planned at City Hall. The planning committee is hoping to have a city trolley operating between sites to expand the reach of the walk. Participants suggested displaying flags from countries representing members of our community.

Lauren shared a flyer they have been distributing at the adult learning center titled, "Know Your Rights". It has been helpful to have some information to give students that have concerns about what they should/shouldn't do when law enforcement approaches them. She also shared a

training by the ACLU, Know Your Rights, that the Cultural Connections Committee is working to bring to Nashua.

Lauren also shared information she learned regarding the 100 mile border zone. This area allows federal border patrol, customs and immigration officials more flexibility with their power. This area covers 2/3 of the U.S. population including the entire state of New Hampshire.

### **One Greater Nashua:**

#### *Cultural Navigators*

Adelina shared that training for a new class of navigators will begin in April. The role of navigators was discussed now that Ascentria has had to reduce staff whether navigators could be assigned a family to help in the transition to Nashua. Amadou also suggested this model could help International Institute families after the first 90 days of case management provided by the resettlement agency. He has developed similar relationships with community agencies in Manchester. Amadou and Adelina will speak further to determine if this will work.

### **Community update:**

Martha discussed a training she went to about the Rapid Response Network. People of faith have organized in response to the fear and anxiety in our community as a result of an increase in immigration enforcement, heightened law enforcement, and other acts of hate.

Sylvia mentioned some of the New Hampshire communities that have voted to become a safe community. A safe community refers to communities in which the local police will not ask immigration status during individual interactions.

### **Resettlement Agency:**

The effects of the executive order travel ban were discussed. In addition, the reduction of individuals being resettled by 60,000 people annually has a direct impact on NH's resettlement agencies. Ascentria has suffered layoffs and a reduction in full time positions. This will make it more difficult for current staff to cover necessary case management of individuals already in NH. There will be a greater need for community support in Nashua.

International Institute of New England will not suffer layoffs, but is restructuring staff. The long term effect of this ban on the agency is unknown at this point. Even with the travel ban temporarily halted while its reviewed by the courts, February and March arrivals are drastically reduced. With the FY18 arrivals capped at 50,000 it is anticipated there will be fewer arrivals in Nashua. Amadou expressed his appreciation for the support the Nashua community has given IINE at this time. They will continue to seek support from volunteers for case management after the first 90 days post arrival. They will also seek community support in gathering donations for individuals soon to be arriving. The question was raised whether the cultural navigators could somehow step into this role and adopt a family to walk them through their transition to Nashua. Amadou is happy to present to faith based organizations and other community groups about the role they can play to help support the agency.

International Institute of New England (IINE):

	<b>FY17 (Nashua)</b>
<b>DRC/Congo</b>	8
<b>Burma</b>	13
<b>El Salvador</b>	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	22

Ascentria Care Alliance:

	<b>February Arrivals (Nashua)</b>
<b>Burma</b>	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4</b>

**Next meeting: Wednesday 04/26/17 from 9:00AM-10:30AM at Nashua City Hall - Auditorium**

*Respectfully Submitted,*  
Jenn Hosking